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# 08/20/1981 - kevin gray

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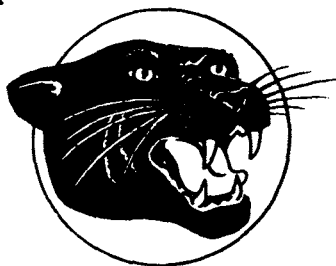
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# **Panther Sports News**

**EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, Charleston, IL 61920**

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**Aug. 20, 1981  
LS-AS-HTs**

## **DEFENSIVE SECONDARY (SIXTH IN A SERIES)**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CHARLESTON, IL-- All-American Kevin Gray (Chicago-Hyde Park) and three year lettermen Wilbert James (Washington, D.C.-Woodson) and Kevin Jones (Springfield-Lanphier) give Eastern Illinois University's Panthers one of the most experienced defensive secondaries in NCAA Division I-AA.

These veterans helped the Panthers pick off 31 pass interceptions last fall, more than any other NCAA team at any level. Gray will probably start at free safety, James at corner and Jones taking over at the other corner in place of graduated Rich Brown.

That leaves just one hole to fill for Rick Schachner, defensive coordinator who also is in charge of the secondary, and he has several candidates vying at strong safety.

Gray received most of the honors last year. He was named Associated Press second Team All-American, Mid-Continent Conference 'Back of the Year' and led the league with seven pass interceptions for 150 yards.

"Kevin's a great athlete . . . we have thought about moving him to corner but prefer free safety. The more we can free him up, the better player he becomes . . . we want to involve him in our scheme as much as possible," Schachner said.

James may be the most underrated player in the secondary, Schachner believes. A four year starter, he moved to cornerback last season from strong safety and picked off five passes.

"Wilbert has great hitting ability and is a dedicated worker. This past spring Jones was out for track and Gray had a class conflict but Wilbert made every practice . . . he held the DBs together during this period."

Jones must feel snake-bitten. He started all but one game at safety his frosh season but has been hampered by injuries the past two years missing the latter two-thirds

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of the '80 campaign with a broken arm.

"Kevin has great size, speed and agility . . . all the tools to be a pro prospect if he can avoid another disabling injury. His height (6-3) will be an asset at corner."

The three most likely candidates for strong safety are journeyman David Cobb (Dixmoor-Thornton) and sophomores Charles Person and Robert Williams (both of Chicago-Dunbar).

Cobb has the most experience and may have the inside track as fall camp opens. Williams is the best hitter while Person has the quickest feet although at 5-10 lacks the height.

Freshman Al Jennings (Chicago-Collins) comes in with some outstanding high school credentials, and may establish himself at some point during the season.